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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28
By McDonald

A RESOLUTION memorializing the United States Congress to help find a peaceful, permanent solution to the conflict in Sudan.

WHEREAS, the United States, a nation founded on the precepts of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, should use its vast resources, assets, and expertise to work with the leaders of the war-ravaged country of Sudan to help create and institute credible reforms with regard to basic human and civil rights for all Sudanese citizens; and

WHEREAS, since 1983, Sudan has been engaged in an increasingly escalating civil war; and

WHEREAS, northern Muslims, who form a majority of about 16 million, traditionally have dominated the government; and

WHEREAS, the southern ethnic groups fighting the civil war, largely followers of traditional indigenous religions or Christianity, who total approximately 6 million, seek independence, or some form of regional self-determination, from the north; and

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WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Committee for Refugees, the civil war has resulted in the deaths of 1.9 million Sudanese, the internal displacement of 4.3 million Sudanese, and the famine-affliction of 2.5 million Sudanese; and

WHEREAS, the National Islamic Front government has perpetrated a prolonged campaign of human rights abuses and discrimination throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of State, Human Rights Report for 1999-Sudan, found that "government security forces regularly tortured, beat, harassed, arbitrarily arrested and detained, and detained incommunicado opponents or suspected opponents of the government with impunity"; and

WHEREAS, the Department of State also found that "both government and rebel factions conscript men and boys forcibly into the fighting forces," resulting in significant hardship and abuse for the conscripts; and

WHEREAS, government security forces beat refugees, raped women, and reportedly harassed and detained persons on the basis of their religion; and

WHEREAS, violence and discrimination against women and abuse of children remain unchecked throughout the country, resulting in the horrors of prostitution, female genital mutilation, child labor, and slavery; and

WHEREAS, due to government restrictions on freedom of association, there are no independent domestic human rights organizations, although individual human rights activists operate in anonymity; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to address this important issue by working to find a permanent, peaceful solution to the Civil War in Sudan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be transmitted forthwith to the President of the United States, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States

House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate, and to each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation.